

One of the biggest metropolitan cities of India, Chennai, earlier known as Madras, is acknowledged as the 'Cultural Capital of India'. It is recognised for its unchanged age old traditions and rich heritage. The city had a humble beginning in 1639 when Francis Day and Andrew Cogan, agents of the erstwhile East India Company, obtained a piece of land from the ruler of Vijayanagar Empire. They named it *Chenna-patnam*. Very soon, it rose to be a presidency town, and after Independence, the capital of Tamil Nadu.

Established in the same year, Fort St. George was one of the earliest constructions in Chennai and was the centre of the British operations in South India. From its beginning, the city has taken a giant leap and is now a major educational, automotive and industrial hub of India. A perfect amalgam of traditions and modernity, the city covers about 200 sq kms of land and stands face to face with the Bay of Bengal in the east.

The city has produced some stalwarts of Carnatic music and is the home of Tamil Film Industry.

### QUICK FACTS

Area	: 177 sq kms
Altitude	: 8 m above sea level
Temperature	: Summer- Max: 36.4°C Min: 27.6°C : Winter- Max: 27°C Min: 15.10°C
Average annual Precipitation	: 130 cms
Best Season	: December to March
STD Code	: 044
Language	: Tamil, English, Hindi

### GETTING TO CHENNAI

#### By Air

The two terminals of Chennai International Airport, Anna International Terminal and Kamaraj Domestic Terminal are located at Tirisulam, about 20 kms from the city centre.

International Flights arrive here from Colombo, Dubai, Singapore, London-Heathrow, New York-JFK, Kuwait, Frankfurt and other destinations. The domestic terminal operates flights to all major destinations. Regular buses, pre-paid taxis and radio cabs are easily available at both terminals. Train services connect Tirisulam to Chennai Egmore.

#### By Rail

Chennai Central and Egmore Station connect Chennai to major parts of the country. While Chennai Central connects the city by broad gauge, Egmore is the halting point for both broad and meter gauges.

Tickets can be booked easily through the Indian Railways website ([www.irctc.co.in](http://www.irctc.co.in)) and reservation counters all over the city.

#### By Road

Chennai is connected by well maintained state and national highways with all important places within the state and other parts of India. The newly opened Chennai Mofussil Bus Terminal at Jawaharlal Nehru Salai is the largest in Asia and operates most government bus services.

Distances of various cities and villages from Chennai are as follows:

Bengaluru 348 kms, Chidambaram 225 kms, Chitradurga 556 kms, Coimbatore 533 kms, Dindigul 455 kms, Guntur 432 kms, Hampi 570 kms, Hassan 539 kms, Hyderabad 642 kms, Kakinada 681 kms, Kanchipuram 73 kms, Kanyakumari 703 kms, Kochi 710 kms, Kozhikode 697 kms, Kurnool 468 kms, Madurai 461 kms, Mamallapuram 55 kms, Mangalore 708 kms, Mysore 482 kms, Nagari 100 kms, Nellore 179 kms, Puducherry 162 kms, Rameswaram 553

kms, Salem 363 kms, Sriperumbudur 40 kms, Thanjavur 338 kms, Thrissur 631 kms, Tiruhirapalli 324 kms, Tirunelveli 617 kms, Tirupati 149 kms, Tuticorin 594 kms, Vellore 136 kms, Vijayawada 470 kms, Warangal 705 kms, Wayanad 616 kms.

You can also rent a car with private tour and cab operators. Pre-paid taxis and cars are available at airports, railway stations and private tour and cab operators.

### GETTING AROUND

Buses are the primary source of transport in Chennai and are run by the government-owned Metropolitan Transport Corporation (MTC). In addition to buses, auto-rickshaws are also a comfortable way of travelling within the city, yet it is good to fix the fare before the ride. 'Call-taxis' are very popular here, just as the name says, these Taxis can be booked on phone and they charge by digital meters. Tourist Cabs are the best choice for sight-seeing purposes and charge about ₹10 per km and ₹50 per hour.

### TOURIST ATTRACTIONS

#### Elliot Beach (Map Grid D4) (Besant Nagar)

The favourite rendezvous for youngsters, it is named after Edward Elliot, who was the Governor of Madras at that time. The beach is home to The Karl Schmidt Memorial which commemorates a Dutch mariner, who died here while saving a man from drowning.



Elliot Beach

#### Theosophical Society (Map Grid D3) (☎: 8.30am-10am, 2pm-5pm; Closed on Sunday; ☎: +91-44-24912474)

This society was established by Madame HP Blavatsky and Col HS Olcott to spread various religious and philosophical theories. Initially founded in New York, it shifted to India with Mumbai as headquarters, in the year 1878. Finally, the international headquarters were relocated to Adyar in Chennai. Having shrines of all faiths, a Garden of Remembrance, a century old library and a research centre on oriental arts, it has an ancient Banyan tree covering over 40,000 sq ft, on its campus.



Theosophical Society

#### Kalakshetra (Map Grid D4) (Tiruvanmiyur; ☎ 10am-6pm; ☎: +91-44-24521169)

The state is well known for its contribution to Bharatnatyam. It has many *gurukul* and training institutes that create future exponents. One of them is Kalakshetra, the school of famous danseuse Rukmini Devi Arundale who founded it in 1936; it came to be also known as 'The Temple of Arts'. The centre provides training to young students and has played a prominent role in keeping alive the classical heritage.



Kalakshetra

#### Guindy National Park (Map Grid D4) (Guindy; Entry fee: Adult/ Child ₹10/ 1; ☎: 9.30am-5.30pm; Closed on Tuesday; ☎: +91-44-22301328)

The Guindy National Park, earlier the property of Gilbert Rodericks was used as a hunting preserve; it was bought by the then Madras Government in the year 1821. Among the flora and fauna, Guindy houses about 14 types of animals and the avifauna exceeds 37 varieties.



Guindy National Park

#### Chennai Snake Park & Children's Park (Map Grid D3 No.7) (Sardar Vallabh Bhai Patel Road; Adult/ Child ₹10/ 2; ☎: 8.30am-5.30pm; Closed: Tuesday; ☎: +91-44-22353623)

Just adjacent to Guindy National Park is the famous Snake park. It was established in 1972 and houses a variety of snakes such as king cobra, pythons, vipers etc. The Park is quite popular among children and herpetologists.

#### Kapaleeswarar Temple (Map Grid D3) (Mylapore; ☎: 6am-1pm, 4pm-8pm; ☎: +91-44-24641670)

The original Kapaleeswarar Temple was built in the 7<sup>th</sup> century by the Pallava kings but was destroyed by the Portuguese. The present structure was built in the 16<sup>th</sup> century by the Vijayanagar kings. It has beautiful paintings and bronze sculptures of the 63 Saivaites Saints in the courtyard.



Kapaleeswarar Temple

#### Santhome Basilica (Map Grid D3) (24, Santhome High Road, Mylapore; ☎: Tamil 6am, 8.15am, 6pm; English 7am, 9.30am, 12noon; ☎: +91-44-24985455)

The Santhome Basilica gets its name from St. Thomas, an apostle of Jesus, who is believed to have come to India sometime in 52 AD. The cathedral was constructed at the site where the remains of St. Thomas were entombed. Situated to the south of Marina Beach, the present structure has seen several renovations after the foundation stone was laid on 2<sup>nd</sup> July, 1523. A statue of Virgin Mary, imported from Portugal is also housed here.



Santhome Basilica

#### Marina Beach (Map Grid E3)

The 13 kms long Marina Beach is the second longest in the world. The shore houses *samadhis* or final resting places' of earlier Chief Ministers of the state like MG Ramachandran, CN Anadurai and many more. While here, one can also marvel at the beautiful edifices which are counted among the best in Chennai. The famous Madras University is also located nearby.

#### Semmozhi Poonga (Map Grid D3 No.1) (Cathedral Road; ☎: 6am-8am Morning Walk, 10am-8pm Tourists; Entry fee: ₹5)

Classical Language Park or *Semmozhi Poonga*, as it is called in Tamil, is a botanical garden considered among the best in the world. Located near the Anna flyover, the 20 acres garden has been meticulously landscaped by the Chennai Horticulture Department. It has more than 500 species of plants, in addition to the 80 pre-existing trees, of which some are more than 100 years old.



Semmozhi Poonga

#### Shri Parthasarathy Temple (Map Grid D3 No.5) (Triplicane; ☎: 5.30am-12noon, 4pm-9pm; ☎: +91-44-28442449/ 28442462)

Dating back to the 8<sup>th</sup> century, the Parthasarathy Temple is believed to be the oldest temple in Chennai. It was previously constructed by the Pallava kings and was further renovated by the Vijayanagar rulers. The temple is a combination of various architectural styles with inscriptions from the time of Pallavas, Cholas and Vijayanagar on its walls.

#### Valluvar Kottam Kodambakkam (Map Grid D3) (Valluvar Kottam High Road, Nungambakkam; ☎: 8am-6pm; ☎: +91-44-28172177)

The carved temple on a chariot is a memorial of Tiruvalluvar, the renowned Tamil poet-saint; its structure reminds one of the temple chariots of *Thiruvavur*. It houses his life-size figure and all 133 chapters from Thirukkural depicted in bas-relief. The auditorium here can accommodate up to 4,000 people at a time.



Valluvar Kottam Kodambakkam

#### Fort St. George (Map Grid E3) (Island Grounds; Indian/ Foreigner: ₹5/ 100; ☎: 10am-5pm; Closed on Friday)

The mighty fort on the shores of Bay of Bengal was built in 1639. As heard, it marks the formation of Chennai city. Inside is a museum displaying various cannons once used by the brave king Tipu Sultan, along with some age old artefacts. The flag pole at the roof is 150 ft high up in the sky and is said to be one of the tallest.

#### St. Mary's Church (Map Grid E3 No.12) (Kamaraj Road, South Line Beach; ☎: 9am-5pm; ☎: +91-44-25672023)

Situated within Fort St. George, the tower like church of St. Mary is also known as 'Westminster Abbey of the East'. It is the first Anglican Church in Asia and was built in 1680; it witnessed the tying of the nuptial knot of Robert Clive with Governor Elihu Yale, who was the pioneer of Yale University. Today the church is taken care of by the Archaeological Survey of India.

### FEW WORDS FROM INDIAN LEXICON

English to Hindi/ Tamil	
Address	: Pata/ Vilasam
Answer	: Jawab/ Badhil
Arrival	: Pahunchna/ Varugai
Baggage	: Saamaan/ Saamaan
Directions	: Dishayen/ Disaigal
Festival	: Tyohar/ Pandigai
Food	: Khana/ Unavu
Friend	: Dost/ Nanban
Fruit	: Phal/ Pazham
Gift	: Uphar/ Parisu
Hungry	: Bhukha/ Pasi
Hurry up	: Jaldi Karo/ Seekiram
Water	: Pani/ Thanneer
Price	: Mulya/ Vilai
Purchase	: Kharidna/ Vangudhal
Question	: Sawal/ Kelvi
Safe	: Surakshit/ Paadhukaappu
Shop	: Dukaan/ Kadai
Thank You	: Dhanyavad/ Nandri
Toilet	: Jan Suvidha/ Kazhipparai
Vegetable	: Sabzi/ Kaaikari
Your	: Tumhara/ Ungal

### CONVERSATIONAL PHRASES

English to Tamil	
At the Airport	: Vimana nilayathil
Where is the exit?	: Velivayil engu ullathu?
How far is the hotel?	: Thangum viduthi evalavu dhuram?
What is the rent?	: Enna vadagai?
Please call Taxi	: Dhayavu seidhu taxi kupidavum
Please stop here	: Dhayavu seidhu ingu nirkavum
Place worth visiting	: Parkka vendiya idam
Want city guide map	: Nagarathin varaipadam vendum
Show me the way	: Vazhi kattavum
Please do booking	: Dhayavu seidhu padhivu seyyavum
Which is the main shopping centre?	: Edhu mukkiyamana kadai theru?
I want to send an e-mail	: Enakku minnanjal anuppa vendum
It is hot/ cold today	: Indru veppamaga/ kuliraga ullathu

### ACCOMMODATION

Wide range of hotels in all categories are available. Contact nearest India tourism office or [www.incredibleindia.org](http://www.incredibleindia.org)

### FAIRS & FESTIVALS

#### Pongal (January)

Pongal is the harvesting festival that marks the end of monsoon season. One of the most important occasions of Tamil Nadu, the rural based festival begins sometime in mid January.

#### Arubathumooavar Festival (March-April)

The day witnesses processions which crowd up the lanes of Mylapore. The 63 bronze idols of Kapaleeswarar and Nayanmars Temple are decorated and driven on carriers with huge ceremonial pomp for the devotees to pay obeisance.



Arubathumooavar Festival

#### Pilliyar Chathurthi/ Vinayagar Chathurthi (August-September)

Ganesh Chathurthi, popularly known as Pilliyar Chathurthi is celebrated with a lot of zest. The state government has taken an initiative towards making it eco-friendly by marking 5 spots in Chennai for idol immersion, fixing the height of the idol to be made and instructing about preparation of the idol with eco-friendly materials.

#### Karthigai Deepam (November)

Celebrated after Diwali, *Karthigai Deepam* falls on the full moon day of November / December. The day is marked by decorating houses with *kolams* or murals, putting lamps or deepam on balconies, windows and doors.

#### Chennai Book Fair (December-January)

A much awaited fair for book lovers, the 10 day yearly exhibition is structured by Booksellers and Publishers Association of South India (BAPASI). Books found here cater to people of every age group and educational standard.

#### Chennai Music and Dance Festival (December-January)

The music and dance festival brings together different aspects of the rich heritage Chennai boasts of. With more than 2,000 participants, the Bharatnatyam dancers and Carnatic music exponents shower the entire area with their colours and sounds.

#### Chennai Sangamam (December-January)

Celebrating India's largest open festival with over 2500 artists, 4500 performances and an audience of more than 25 lakhs, Chennai Sangamam is organised by *Tamil Maiyam*, a non-profit trust that forms a part of the Department of Tourism and Culture of the Tamil Nadu Government.

### SHOPPER'S PARADISE

#### Ampa Skywalk (Aminjikarai) (Map Grid D3)

#### Anna Salai (Map Grid D3 No.10)

The Anna Salai market is an amalgam of handicraft showrooms of the state government and expensive malls. Whether one is looking for a pepe jeans or a Kanchipuram silk saree, the place offers every kind.

#### Burma Bazaar (Rajaji Salai) (Map Grid E2 No.13)

If you are looking for some imported stuff, Burma Bazaar is a perfect place for you. Replete with all kinds of electronic gadgets, clothing, perfumes etc. the products here are quite cheap if you have good bargaining skills.

#### Chennai Citi Centre (Mylapore) (Map Grid D3)

#### Egmore Street (Map Grid D3)

Locally known as 'Cotton Street', the place is popular for all kinds of cotton available in the best of quality. Various dress materials are available here in copper sulphate brown, lemon greens, sunny yellows, fuchsia pinks and many more. Prices will depend on how much one can bargain.

#### Express Avenue Mall (Royapettah) (Map Grid D3 No.2)

#### George Town (Map Grid D2)

The George Town market is famous for being the wholesale centre of Chennai.

#### Gold Mall (Usman Road) (Map Grid D2)

A place for gold lovers, the newly opened mall is the only one of its kind in the world. Looking at the quantity of jewellery bought by people, the entire complex is full of shops offering exquisite designs made available from almost all parts of the world.

#### Pondy Bazaar (Thyagaraya Road) (Map Grid D3 No.8)

Pondy Bazaar is a makeshift market. Covering the pavements, they sell goods that include fashion to household products.

#### T Nagar Market (Map Grid D3 No.9)

One of the most crowded markets of Chennai, the place is visited for its variety of silk and gold products. It is said to be one of the biggest markets in South India.



T Nagar Market

#### Ranganathan Street (Map Grid D3)

Ranganathan Street is a shopper's paradise and a foodie's feast. From pavement shops to food joints, it is a haven for bargainiers.

#### Spencer Plaza (Anna Salai, Mount Road) (Map Grid D3)

### TOURIST INFORMATION CENTRES

#### India Tourism, Chennai

154, Anna Salai, Chennai-600002  
☎: +91-44-28461459/ 28460285  
(f): +91-44-28460193  
@: indtour@dataone.in

#### Tamil Nadu Tourism Development Corporation, Tourism Complex

No.2, Wallajah Road, Triplicane, Chennai-600 002  
☎ : +91-44-25383333/ 25389857/ 25367850  
(f) : +91-44-25361385/ 25381567

@ : ttcdc@vsnl.com  
(w) : [www.tamilnadutourism.org](http://www.tamilnadutourism.org)

### LIST OF MUSEUMS

#### Birla Planetarium (Map Grid D3)

Tamil Nadu Science & Technology Centre, Gandhi Mandapam Road, Behind CLRI

☎: +91-44-24410025/ 24416751/ 24915250

**Timings:** 10am-5.45pm, 10.45am, 1.15pm, 3.45pm (English) 12 noon, 2.30pm (Tamil) **Closed:** National Holidays **Entry Fee:** Adult/ Child- ₹40/ 25

#### Fort Museum (Map Grid E3 No.11)

Fort St. George☎: +91-44-25671127

**Timings:** 10am-5pm **Closed:** Friday & National Holidays **Entry Fee:** Indian/ Foreigner- ₹5/ 100

#### Regional Rail Museum (Map Grid D2)

Avadi Road, ICF, Near ICF Bus Stand

☎: +91-44-26201014

**Timings:** 10am-6pm **Closed:** Monday & National Holidays **Entry Fee:** Adult/ Child- ₹15/ 10

#### Vivekananda Museum (Map Grid D3)

Kamarajar Salai

☎: +91-44-28446188

**Timings:** 10am-12pm, 3pm-7pm

**Closed:** Wednesday & National Holidays

**Entry Fee:** Adult/ Child- ₹2/ 1

#### Government Museum (Map Grid D3)

Pantheon Road, Egmore  
☎: +91-44-28193238/ 28193778 **Timings:** 9.30am-5pm **Closed:** Friday & National Holidays

**Entry Fee:** Adult/ Child/ Student- ₹15/ 10/ 5 (Indian); Adult/ Child/ Student- ₹250/ 125/ 75 (Foreigner)

Camera/ Video: ₹200/ 500 per camera



Government Museum

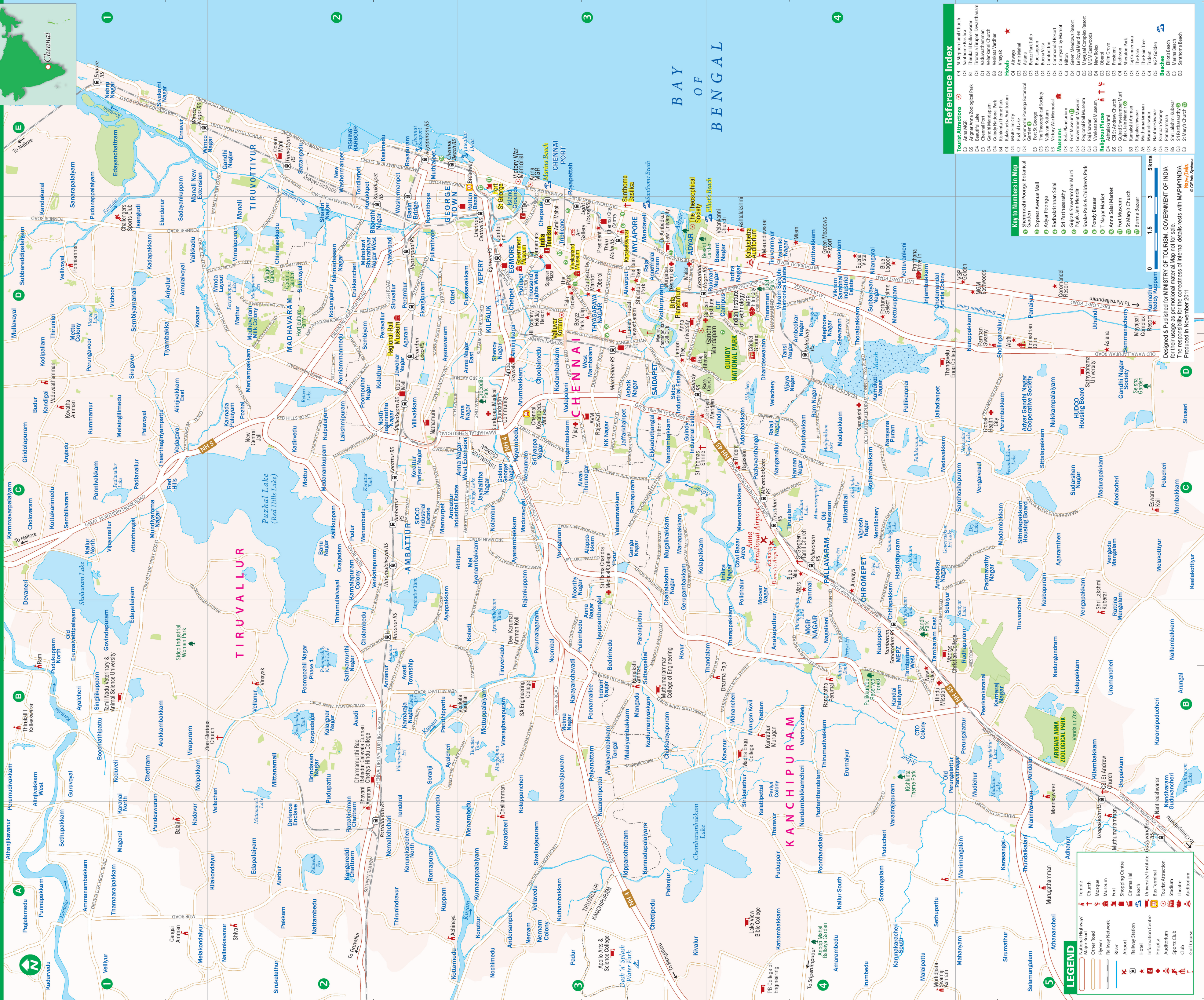
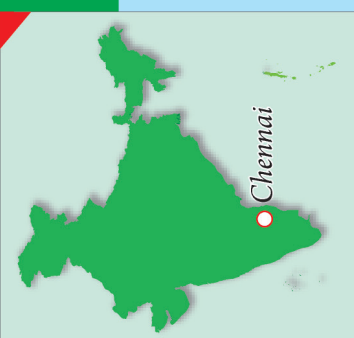
### IMPORTANT NUMBERS

Ambulance	102
Police	100
Fire Brigade	101
Traffic/ Accidents	103
Helpline DG's office	+91-44-28447200
Chennai Central Enquiry	131
Chennai Egmore Enquiry	135
Airport Enquiry	140/ 142
ESI Hospital-Ayanavaram	+91-44-26470261/ 26479173
ESI Hospital-KK Nagar	+91-44-24892027/ 24892171/ 24891094
Pre Paid Taxi Counter	+91-44-24732020
Foreigners Regional Regn. Office	+91-44-23454970/ 28218844/ 28252767
CMBT (Tamil Nadu Transport Corporation)	+91-44-24794705/ 09

Note: Due to space constraint, all places of interest could not be included here. For more up-to-date information, contact nearest India Tourism office. Or visit [www.incredibleindia.org](http://www.incredibleindia.org)



# CHENNAI



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**Key to Numbers in Map**

- ① Shemshoni Poonga Botanical Garden
- ② Express Avenue Mall
- ③ Adyar Poonga
- ④ Radhakrishnan Salai
- ⑤ Sri Parthasarathy
- ⑥ Guindy Chowdambhar Murti
- ⑦ Pullik Jain Mandir
- ⑧ Snake Park & Children's Park
- ⑨ Pondy Bazaar
- ⑩ T Nagar Market
- ⑪ Anna Salai Market
- ⑫ Fort Museum
- ⑬ St Mary's Church
- ⑭ Burma Bazaar

The map shows the garden area in blue, surrounded by roads like Panayur Road, East Coast Road, and Malabar Hill Road. Landmarks include Aiof Club, Coromandel Resort, Uthandhi, Asiana, Kommanacheri, Kamnathur Reddy Kuppam, and Kamnathur. A scale bar indicates distances up to 5 kms.

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